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25 November 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT: Briefing of Personnel Prior to Overseas Assignment

I. DISCUSSION:

1. You have asked me to make a study of Agency concepts and procedures for briefing employees destined for overseas duty with a view toward eliminating complaints and claims originating or caused by inadequate briefing. Accordingly, I have made a study of the briefing concept and procedures of CIA with regard to personnel going overseas and have determined that there is no general Agency concept.

2. Technical responsibility for supervision of the processing of personnel being assigned overseas duty has been placed with the Central Processing Branch of the Personnel Division/Covert. In addition to the physical processing of personnel, some attempt is made at this point to actually brief the individual on problems which he will encounter in the physical process of terminating his household arrangements in the United States and in moving himself, family and household effects to the foreign post. Essentially, this is the extent of specialized Agency briefing given to overseas personnel.

3. We also find that basic responsibility for briefing personnel for overseas duty is vested with the Area Divisions in both the Clandestine Services Offices and the Office of Communications. In the Clandestine Services Office, we find extreme variance in the attitude of Area Divisions toward the concept of briefing personnel and even as to the need for briefing. These attitudes range from almost complete apathy and the provision of little or no briefing to serious considerations and conscientious effort to meet all possible processing and informational needs of the individual traveller. In the Office of Communications, we find acute awareness of the value of proper indoctrination of personnel designed to assist them in effecting the transition to a foreign post and the assumption of duties there. The Office of Communications endeavors to supply detailed information concerning conditions and problems related to each specific post of overseas duty. We likewise find that the Office of Communications maintains careful supervisory control over the manner in which the Area Divisions fulfill their briefing responsibilities.

4. Objective analysis of the best features of briefing observed at random in the Agency indicates that individual officials have made a conscientious effort to properly brief and assist their personnel but that the Agency does not have an adequate briefing program or concept. In order to develop such a program, we must first define briefing and its purpose. Briefing is simply the process of providing personnel with all the information they should possess in order to arrange their personal affairs in the United States, transport themselves, dependents and household effects to the overseas post and to enter into a permanent

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living status at the post and to assume their operational duties with the maximum amount of efficiency and the minimum amount of difficulty and confusion.

5. Accordingly, the first step is to determine what specific information and assistance personnel should receive prior to undertaking their movement abroad. There is attached hereto a general listing of the information considered essential to this processing. It will be noted from the nature of the information deemed essential, that it is inadvisable, if not impossible, to provide this information from one Agency focal point or in one short briefing session. It is also impossible to completely separate this briefing from general Agency indoctrination procedures and specific job training procedures. Rather, it is apparent that briefing is a continuous process which should commence with the recruitment of the individual and is furthered during his job training and should be concluded prior to his departure. Because of the specialized nature of some aspects of briefing, it should preferably be provided by Agency offices and staffs having basic responsibility for the technical function or responsibility involved. Some aspects of briefing are susceptible to collective training by lectures and written pamphlets. Other aspects are highly pertinent to the individual and the specific overseas post and job to which he is assigned.

6. All of these factors warrant careful Agency study of the briefing requirements of personnel assigned to overseas duty, the assignment of responsibility for performing and ensuring participation in the specific portions of the over-all briefing program, the development of whatever facilities as may be necessary to carry out each portion of the program, and the continuous compilation of information necessary to a ~~complete~~ keeping briefing ~~material~~ material current and vital.

7. Until this complete study has been made and an Agency over-all concept as to briefing requirements has been developed, a complete set of recommendations for the improvement of the briefing system cannot be submitted. Nevertheless, a general course of action is recommended below together with numerous specific recommendations considered appropriate for immediate implementation.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Agency officials develop and agree upon the minimum briefing concept deemed necessary or desirable and a procedure which will ensure that every person is properly briefed.

2. The responsibility for the various phases of briefing be firmly placed among the appropriate offices and staffs.

3. That each responsible office develop a sound program and procedure to ensure fulfillment of its assigned responsibility.

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4. That a procedure be developed so that information needed to provide proper briefing is secured on an efficient and timely basis and distributed to the appropriate briefing points. This information is presently not uniformly available nor is it properly distributed. Foreign Service reports should be maintained on a current basis. CIA should develop its own supplementary post reports and a system for securing such reports from travellers so that information concerning current problems and helpful suggestions on travel to every point in the world is maintained.

5. That as much briefing material as possible be reduced to writing in the form of post reports, travel guides, etc., and that wherever possible such material be unclassified and be given to the traveller for use by himself and his dependents. That bibliographies be prepared listing recommended basic reading on every post or area in order that personnel may orient themselves as much as possible to the conditions they will encounter at their post of duty.

6. That a reading room be provided wherein all personnel can study, review and take notes at their leisure on information which will be necessary or useful to them.

7. That interviewers and advisors be provided in the Central Processing Branch (as at the present time) to give personnel whatever supplementary advice, guidance and processing assistance as may be necessary.

8. That a comprehensive check list be devised covering the entire concept of briefing as it may be developed and be applied as a control mechanic by Central Processing Branch to ensure fulfillment of the briefing program.

III. APPENDICES:

1. Appendix A, as previously mentioned, contains a listing of information on training which we believe every employee should receive prior to departure for overseas duty.

2. Appendix B, is a State Department pamphlet explaining the government system of allowances in understandable layman language and is illustrative of what can be done with information of a highly technical nature and yet which is of vital interest to the individual employee. We do not believe Agency employees are exposed to this or similar essential information.

3. Appendix C, consists of specialized post reports prepared by the Office of Communications which illustrate the type of information which should be assembled by this Agency and be made available to its employees.

IV. CONCLUSION:

1. Proper briefing of personnel is a problem far more important than the mere avoidance of complaints and claims. Proper briefing is essential to the development of high morale and the avoidance of job and assignment disillusionment. It warrants careful planning and continuous study to ensure the maintenance of a high degree of effectiveness.

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